

THE

Magnolia

NEWS

NEWS OF INTEREST TO THE RESIDENTS OF MAGNOLIA POINT

VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 5

MAY 2026



2026
WINNER CHARLIE AWARD
 Association/Non Profit
Best Overall: Magazine

WINNER CHARLIE AWARD
 Association/Non Profit
Best Overall: Design



Welcome May!

April was grand, as TMN racked up two new awards, the ‘Oscars of Florida Magazines’, the ‘Charlie’ for **Best Magazine and Best Design!** Thank you all who contribute, and all who support us with their advertising. ‘MPCA News’ is reimagined in this issue on **pages 4-6**. The Couple’s 9-Hole League concludes their season on **pages 13-14**. Introducing ‘Chapter & Verse’ and our own local talent Lou Pugliese, **page 18**. Back by popular demand are those bird’s eye views of our ponds, on **page 24**. ‘Things That Paddle’ might be the theme of the photo gallery on **pages 29-31**. Dig it!

2025

FIRST PLACE
 BEST USE PHOTOS



National Newspaper Foundation

SECOND PLACE
NUSA
 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER
 Neighborhoods USA

It’s a new feature, ‘Curb Drop’, and we show a street’s eye view of some very nice homes! **Page 10.**



And, the latest ‘MIXmagic’, it’s, wait for it...the ‘Range Finder’, on **page 23!**



TOONS

Also new, and just... silly! We sketch out in pen-and-ink some of the foibles of modern life. We hope! **Page 12.**

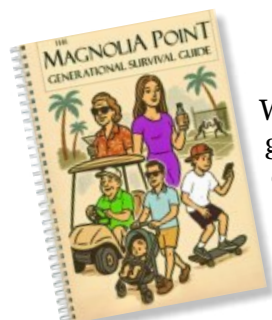


‘No Grits, No Glory!’ is this month’s recipe in the new ‘Good 2 Go’, **pages 25-26.**

Alas, Nute! And some wisdom about golf balls worth heeding in ‘Playing Through’, **pages 16-17.**



This month’s ‘Faces & Names’ visits a wonderful family settled down **in our landscape, page 28.**



With ‘Turf Wars’, the gardening gloves are off, and it’s spilled out onto the lawn! **Pages 19-20.**

So what else can you do with that fancy range-finder you got for Christmas? Find out on **page 22.**



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MAGNOLIAresidents.com

The Magnolia News does not accept political, social commentary, or opinion pieces for publication.



EXTRA!

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 5

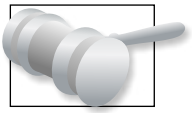
“BREAKING NEWS FROM BEHIND THE HEDGES”

MAY 2026



dp





ACCESS CONTROL • *Chuck Cox*

The Committee has tackled a wave of recent gate equipment failures. For instance, the rear exit gate arm actually fell off its carrier due to excessive shaking, which also snapped a light cable. At the front gate, under-road cable connectivity was lost to the guard house, meaning only older remotes worked because of a backup receiver in the guard shack. To work around the road expansion, the team replaced in-road loops with virtual ones and set up a temporary speed bump to run cables across the road until the paving was complete. These items constituted a few



unplanned costs relevant to the road widening project which were approved at the April meeting. They also fixed an issue where the front gate was staying open for six seconds instead of one, and installed a new lightning suppressor to protect the rear gate equipment. The rear metal gates were also refurbished and painted. Work has begun for upgrade of the rear equipment box and photobeams, and to install new gate arm operators on the entrance side. They are also expecting the Board to provide a final vote on migration to a new RFID system along with associated updates to the existing remote access policy.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW • *Wally Bransford*

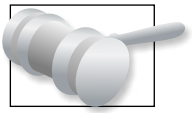
The Committee had a highly productive March, processing 21 different homeowner projects. These neighborhood improvements included eight roof replacements on streets like Pebble Beach and Medinah, four tree removals, three exterior painting projects, three new fences, and several other updates like new garage and patio doors. While the committee's report does not outline formal, high-level strategic plans for the future, their ongoing, day-to-day work is essential for keeping the neighborhood looking its best.



A special note of appreciation was given to David Miller, who stepped up to conduct project reviews, while the committee chair was out of the country for a couple of weeks. They will continue this active pace of reviewing and approving homeowner applications as we head into the spring season.

Continued





MPCA REPORTS



COMMUNICATIONS • *Joanne LeBeouf*

The focus right now is launching a brand-new community newsletter. After reviewing different options, they selected an independent publisher who has worked with the community before, and they are currently asking the Board to approve a \$2,050 budget to fund a six-page, ad-free newsletter from May through December. They also just paid \$798 for a year-long Constant Contact subscription, which will not only house our community database but also allow the committee to send out large surveys and quick, one-question polls via email. Very soon, they plan to upload several pending documents to the website, including the updated Rules and Regulations Handbook. They will also be emailing a comprehensive website user guide to all residents and hosting a tutorial presentation, complete with an embedded video, leading up to the May Board meeting.



COMMUNITY LIAISON • *Monty Murphy*

The Community Liaison Committee recently held their first meeting of the year to review their charter and discuss a major, ongoing concern: the deteriorating bulkhead on Red Nine Hole #3. This bulkhead has been falling apart for over three years; while the Club was previously notified and even made some repairs back in 2025, a recent, very clear photograph of the area showed the committee that the problem is far from resolved. Because of a separate, long-standing legal dispute between the Club and the HOA, the committee is largely stuck in a holding pattern and cannot force major action just yet. However, their immediate next step is to conduct a thorough on-site inspection of the failing bulkhead during their Annual Club Facilities Inspection, which is scheduled to take place throughout the month of April.

LANDSCAPE & IRRIGATION • *Cindy Francisco*

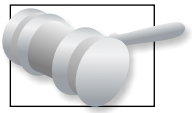
The Committee is heavily focused on recovering from recent freeze and drought damage, while also dealing with old infrastructure and a lack of historical plumbing documentation from the city. Their upcoming project list is



massive. They plan to repair damaged garden beds, restore the architectural lighting and irrigation that was torn up by the boulevard expansion, wrap more large electrical boxes in vinyl, and add new park benches. They are formally proposing to split the center median's irrigation into two separate zones because the current setup is too large and lacks water pressure, and they want to upgrade the sprinkler heads at the front entrance for better

Continued





coverage. Other near-term plans include fixing the fountain pond's refill system, pruning tree canopies over the roadways to meet safety standards, and potentially exploring a new walking trail around the fountain pond. NOTE: *"The pond is filling nicely. We've been assessing the irrigation system. Now that the widening has been completed, we will be reinstalling the irrigation and lighting."*

ROADS, DRAINAGE & WATERWAYS • *(Unassigned)*

The Committee had a stroke of luck recently when a contractor had leftover asphalt from pouring a new driveway on Mamaroneck Court. The contractor agreed to use the extra material to finish the community's "Priority A" road patches, including intersections at Colonial and Muirfield, at no extra cost to the HOA. The long-awaited



entryway expansion project, which was actually designed over four years ago, is also nearly complete now. Soon, they will finish labeling the resident and visitor lanes and make sure all signs are reinstalled. Later in April or May, they plan to tackle "Priority B and C" road patches before shifting their focus to crack filling. After recently touring neighboring communities like Marsh Landing and Sawgrass to see their storm water systems, the committee also hopes to adopt modern, colorized CAD maps to better track our own road repairs.

RULES ENFORCEMENT • *Larry Francisco*

The Rules Enforcement Committee did not actually hold a meeting or any hearings in March because no neighborhood violations escalated to the level requiring one. However, their addendum report provided a detailed look at the community's statistics from February, where they closed 31 violations, issued 19 first notices, and sent out 11 courtesy notices. If you are wondering what kinds of rules are being broken, the vast majority of these issues were simply for general maintenance (40%) and landscaping problems (27%). Minor offenses made up the rest, including unauthorized parking of boats and RVs, driveway maintenance, garbage bin issues, and unapproved flags. While the committee does not have any specific new initiatives or strategic plans listed for the near future, they will continue monitoring the neighborhood and issuing notices for these routine maintenance issues as they arise.

STRATEGIC PLANNING • *Ann Sims*

The Committee has been meeting at the police department's EOC room to hash out two major, long-term initiatives for the neighborhood. Members Ann, Janet, Bob, Mike, and Jon met twice in March to continue drafting the Club Contingency Plan as well as a high-level, five-year Strategic Plan for the community. Because both of these documents are incredibly extensive and detailed, the committee's near-term focus is strictly on revising and finalizing them so they can be officially presented to the Board. Once those massive plans are wrapped up and submitted, the committee's very next project will be drafting and launching a community-wide survey to gather everyone's thoughts on traffic and speeding issues within the neighborhood.





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New Year Begins

The Women's Club new fiscal year begins on May 1. The new executive officers, approved by members at its April meeting, will be sworn in at the May 13 luncheon. New officers are **Adele Murphy**, President;

Laura Emery, Vice President; **Lynn Powers**, Recording Secretary; **Cheryl Smith**, Corresponding Secretary; and **Linda Werring**, Treasurer.

There will also be new committee chairs taking over established committees, and the 25th year of the Club's existence will provide lots of opportunities for members to participate. If any member would like to join one of the committees, please contact Adele Murphy.

Donations to Clay County Charitable Organizations

The first prong of the Women's Club mission statement is to support efforts to improve the lives of underserved residents of Clay County. That mission is the focus of many of the Club's fundraising efforts throughout the year, including the annual luminaria event that is generously supported by Magnolia Point residents. At the April 8 member meeting, members approved the award of \$6,500 to 14 charitable organizations in Clay County. Receiving \$500 each were the Augusta Savage Mentoring Center, Clay County Rescue Mission, Food Pantry of Green Cove Springs, Friends of the Green Cove Springs Library, J.P. Hall Children's Charities, Hope Therapy, Mercy Support Services, Pace Center for Girls, Quigley House, Vineyard Transitional Center, Waste Not Want Not and the Way Clinic. Clay County Habitat for Humanity and the Dolly Parton Imagination Library-Clay County each received \$250. Susan Hanline, Activities Director, presented the \$500 check to Mike Howell, Community Relations Specialist at Quigley House. Mr. Howell was the program speaker at the April member meeting.



Membership



Director **Diane Lochner** and members of the Membership Committee met in April to plan for the upcoming year. The Committee members were also joined by current President **Pam Young** and incoming President **Adele Murphy**. Under Diane's leadership, the Membership Committee has grown to seven members. **Stephanie Sessions** and **Cheryl Smith** are members of the Sunshine subcommittee; **Barbara Adams** and **Cheri Starnes** are members of the Helping Hands subcommittee; and **Dee Butler** and **Dianne Dearth** make up the Hospitality subcommittee, that delivers welcome bags to all new residents of Magnolia Point. All of these members are important "faces" of the Women's Club and we thank them for all they do.

Any woman who is a Magnolia Point resident or property owner, or a member of the Country Club, can become a member. If you know of someone who would like to become a Women's Club member, please have them contact Diane Lochner, Membership Director, at diane.scorpio@gmail.com.





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*"Low compression off the tee. High compression on the calf.
Somewhere in the middle is where I get to play."*

TOONS



*The REC has alerted Morty that his trash bin
is visible to NAS traffic on approach.*





Couple's NINE HOLE LEAGUE

April 12 - It was a beautiful, windy day on the Front 9! We had a large turnout of five foursomes, 10 couples who came to play our Couples Scramble!

1st Place - **Team Larry & Judy Sessions and Bob & Diane Gove** scored a **37!**

2nd Place - **Team Bill Grasch & Anita O'Donnell and Bruce & Jeanne Gorman**, **38**

3rd Place - **Team Don & Dianne Dearth and Pat O'Neil & Rita Altman** scored a **40**

Highlights - **Diane Gove** from *Team Gove & Sessions*, the only birdie of the game on Hole #2!

1st Place

2nd Place

3rd Place



THE SEASON'S LAST GAME

The Couples League's seasons last game was played on 4/26/26 followed by a pizza party to celebrate a great year. Two-foursomes played a Scramble on the Front Nine.

1st Place - **Team Don & Dianne Dearth and Den & Janine O'Connor** with a **37!**

Team Dearth & O'Connor birdie on #4; Team O'Neil, Altman & Costa & Johnson birdie on #8

Afterwards a fun pizza party was held at **Pat O'Neil's** home. He and **Rita Altman** hosted the party beautifully along with Max the beloved dog. Chatter was heard about the game, food and many topics of interest. There were tons of food, drink and ending with gift bags for the attendees.

Continued



League hosts **Don & Dianne Dearth** thanked everyone for a great two-year run and reminded all that next season, **Doug & Mauricia Buchanan** will be hosting and to look for their email in the fall. A total of 16 couples played throughout this season, so growth was seen this year for sure! *See you next season!*



 Couple's



- DIANNE DEARTH





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Playing Through

- CHRISTIAN SMITH

SPRING EQUIPMENT REVIEW: GOLF BALLS

I get a lot of questions about which golf ball I like to play, and whether it is worth it to play the high end balls like Titleist ProV1/ProV1x, Callaway Chrome Tour, Taylormade TP5/TP5x, and the like. There are a lot of factors that go into deciding on a golf ball that is best for you. This ranges from physical attributes you may have like swing speed and strength, to how competitive you play (recreationally vs. tournament), and even includes the conditions of the course you are playing.

Before I delve into those, let's talk about the differences in golf balls. I'm going to generalize because there are so many varieties of balls out there, it would be overkill to go through all the brands.

Ball Design: The high-end balls that usually retail for \$50+ per dozen are typically 3-piece balls with a softer urethane cover. They are designed to optimize distance while also providing more spin with the wedges and around the greens. The ball tends to stay on the face a smidge longer due to the softer cover and allows more workability (fades/draws) in shot-making. The less expensive options these companies provide are typically 2-piece balls with a firmer Surlyn or Ionome cover. These balls are designed to reduce sidespin so they fly straighter for a higher handicap player, but also provide plenty of distance. Because they have a firmer cover and a solid core, they do not spin as much around the greens so touch can be a little more difficult. I feel like they shoot off the face a little bit around the greens.

Compression: Back in the day you typically had three levels of compression and they were designated very distinctly. There were 'ladies' balls as they were typically referred to that were usually 80 compression, and then 90 compression and 100 compression. The 90 compression balls typically had red numbers on them, and the 100 compression had black numbers. This was also usually delineated on the package as well. The higher the compression, the more swing speed it takes to 'compress' the ball. Compressing the ball simply means the amount of squeeze you can put on it to create somewhat of a trampoline effect. If you play a ball that is too



Continued





hard (higher compression/100 for example) and your swing speed is not adequate, the ball will come out dull and not provide the lift you need. These days you really have to look at the specs on the balls. For example, Maxfli has the TourS, the Tour, and the TourX. The TourS is around 85 compression, Tour is 90-ish, and the TourX is 100 compression. As an example, if your swing speed isn't over 110 mph, you don't want to play a 100 compression ball. In my estimation, softer is typically better because you are ensuring you are compressing the ball.

Conditions and the right ball: There are two aspects of this I want to cover and the first is the course itself. If you are playing a course with very firm and fast greens, it is more important to have a 3-piece ball because you need spin to control the ball and stop it where you want. It

becomes more of a guessing game if you are using a harder 2-piece ball. Conversely, if the greens are soft and receptive, you can get away without the more precise control of the 3-piece ball and save yourself some money. Second is the weather and in particular, the outside temperature. The colder the weather, the harder the ball gets. In the winter, I will usually switch to a 90 compression ball instead of 100 for me. In extreme cold, I have played 80 compression balls. For every 10 degree deviation from 72 degrees, the ball will travel ~2 yards farther or shorter based on the temperature. So if it is 52 degrees, expect the ball to travel 4-5 yards less in the air, and at 92 degrees, expect 4-5 yards further.

How you play: If you are a recreational golfer that just likes to have a good time and is less concerned about score, there are plenty of great 2-piece ball options like the Callaway SuperSoft, and the Bridgestone E6, just to name a couple. If you are more competitive and take scoring seriously, you might want to invest in the high end balls. I actually fluctuate and I play pretty seriously. Our greens are relatively soft and I play a lot of casual rounds (even though I am trying to do my best), and in those rounds I'll use one of the good cheaper 2-piece balls. When I play in competition, I will usually play a practice round or two with my premium ball of choice and use those in the tournament.

“If you are a recreational golfer that just likes to have a good time and is less concerned about score, there are plenty of great 2-piece ball options”

Based on your profile, swing speed, how you play, time of year, I would just test some different brands out. People are finicky about brands; how they look, how they feel, etc. Look up the specs on them before you buy and make sure you pay attention to the compression and the type of ball flight it is supposed to promote (high, mid, low) and the spin factor. Once you find one you like, stay with it.

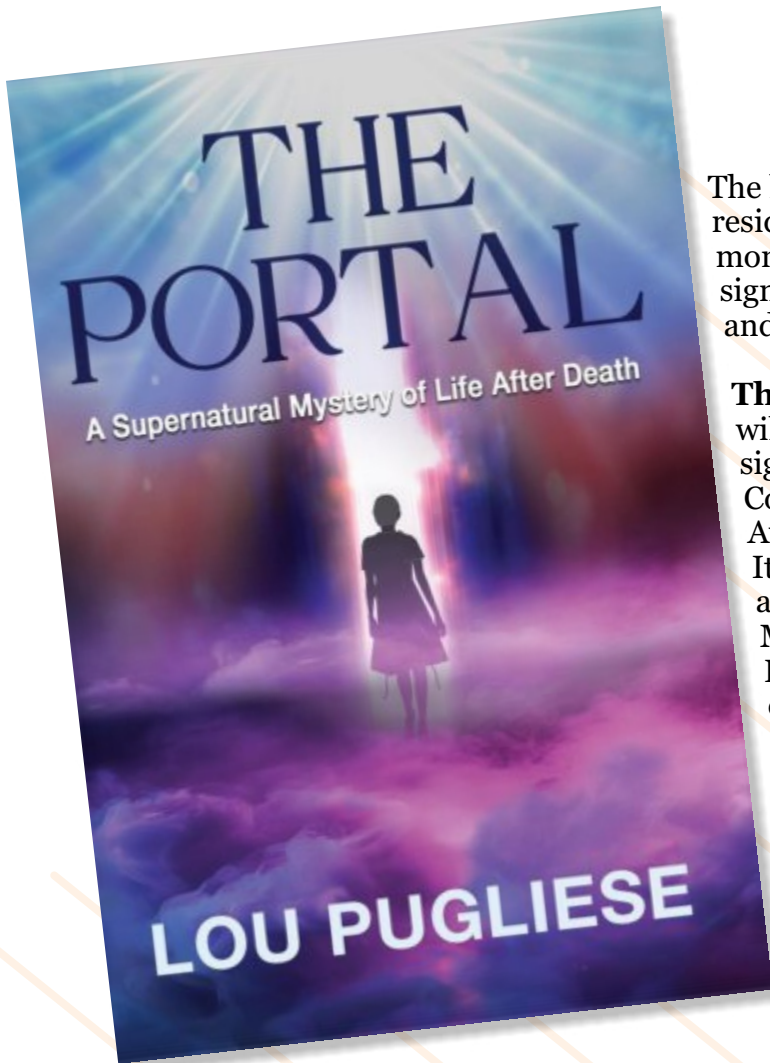
- CS

Photos:Editor



CHAPTER & VERSE

B O O K S



MAGNOLIA POINT'S OWN LOU PUGLIESE

The latest book by our author-in-residence comes to town this month with an exclusive book signing at The Corner Pocket, and you're invited!



The Portal by Lou Pugliese will be featured at a book signing event hosted by 'The Corner Pocket' on 14 Magnolia Avenue, Green Cove Springs. It's the third book in the award-winning "*Blame it on the Moon*" series. Mark your calendars for **May 23** and come see Lou from 5-7. Paperback and hardcover versions of the entire series will be available. (NOTE: It's shrimp night at 'The Pocket' and rumor has it that 'Lincoln' the Sheltie may also be attending!

Lou, his wife Kathy and Sheltie Mitch have been Magnolia Point residents for over 7 years. Kathy wanted to end up in one place and it had to be one where she would never see snow again. Magnolia Point turned out to be the perfect home for them!

Lou has published two books in the series, "*Blame it on the Moon*" and "*Final Exam*". You can find his books here: [Amazon](#)

Book Signing May 23 - The Corner Pocket *You're Invited!*

"An engrossing supernatural drama that is surprisingly heartwarming."

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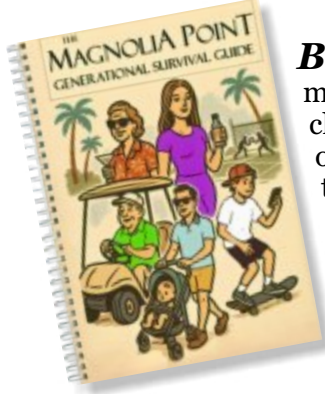
-Peter Hassebroek,
Independent Book Review

"Suspenseful, controversial, fast-moving and thought provoking."

-Olga Markova,
Reader's Favorite



Generational Survival Guide - *Chapter 4: Turf Wars*



Boomers: For Boomers, yard maintenance is not a weekend chore; it is a profound reflection of character and high art. The true modern Boomer artisan focuses on maintaining "lawns so precisely edged they'd make NASA jealous". Hedge trimming is a sculptural discipline, and garden beds sacred spaces where mulch

must be constantly freshened and meticulously moistened to get the perfect earthy aesthetic. To a Boomer, this pristine landscaping is the glue that holds "shared property values" together. Stray too far and you might find you're the addressee on a "Sorry-But-Dirty Roof" letter.

The Rest of Y'all:

Meanwhile, the Y'alls approach the neighborhood biome armed with "multitasking skills, flexible working hours", and a complete philosophy. You are far from lazy; rather, you are passionate advocates for "natural" property maintenance. Between recovering from "Alanis Morissette angst" and managing "five different versions of the iPhone charging cable", the rigid geometry of traditional lawn care feels outdated to you. Instead, you strive for the "Florida-Friendly Landscape," viewing it as the absolute pinnacle of proper, green property care. You champion biodiversity, water conservation, and native plantings over chemical fertilizers, perfectly content to let nature take its course, and relying on

your "superior night vision" to enjoy your thriving oasis after the sun goes down.

Life in the Wild: A Boomer's been up since dawn, carefully hydrating fresh mulch and admiring their razor-sharp driveway edging. A Millennial neighbor steps out to check on their native pollinator shrubs, sipping an iced *caffè latte*. The Boomer pauses, leans on the fence, and offers a tentative nod towards the wilder, Florida-Friendly yard next door. Later, at the clubhouse, the Boomer politely brings up the secret to proper mulch pH, triggering the younger resident to enthusiastically launch into a defense of natural pest control and

sustainable water management.

Survival

Play: When trapped in a conversation about landscaping, survival requires tactical flattery. Compliment the Boomer's precise edging or ask them for their secret to keeping their mulch looking so incredibly fresh. Much like asking a Boomer if they remember when "Stairway to Heaven" was released, asking for their advice on hedge trimming will immediately forge a bond and stroke their ego. If they eye your native plants with suspicion, politely reframe your yard not as an overgrown mess, but as a deliberate, eco-conscious



"Florida-Friendly" choice. And if you do accidentally run afoul of the HOA and receive a letter from Laura, do not deploy your generation's nuclear option: the passive-aggressive "K" text. Instead, respond with a handwritten note promising to tidy up, perhaps Doordashing some banana bread to St. Augustine to buy yourself a little goodwill.



1. The Boundary Maintainer

Boomer Tool: The NASA-Calibrated Laser Edger

Because Boomers are known for maintaining "lawns so precisely edged they'd make NASA jealous", a standard weed-whacker simply won't do. This tool comes with built-in calipers and a protractor to ensure every blade of grass forms a perfect 90-degree angle along the concrete. It is essential for treating "hedge trimming as a sculptural discipline".

Y'all's Tool: The "Certified Florida-Friendly" Yard Plaque

Why edge when you can 'rewild'? This karmic talisman disguised as a metal sign on a stake is the Y'all's most powerful landscaping tool. Placed strategically in the front yard, it acts as a 'Karma-Keyed' magical shield against the HOA, allowing the Y'all to maintain a "stubborn refusal to mow your lawn before it's absolutely necessary" under the unassailable guise of promoting native biodiversity and calming wildlife with its invisible soothing life-force.

2. The Hydration System

Boomer Tool: The Ergonomic Mulch-Moistening Mister

For the Boomer artisan, garden beds are sacred spaces where mulch must be "constantly freshened and meticulously moistened to achieve the perfect earthy aesthetic". This tool provides a gentle, pH-balanced misting action, ensuring the soil looks freshly rained upon without splashing a single drop of mud onto the driveway.

Y'all's Equivalent: The Half-Empty Iced Coffee Tumbler

Armed with "multitasking skills", a Y'all's approach to plant hydration is delightfully casual. While checking on their native pollinator shrubs, whatever melted ice is left at the bottom of their morning cold brew is generously dumped onto a nearby fern. Nature will take care of the rest.

3. The Illumination Device

Boomer Tool: The 1,000-Lumen Tactical Flashlight

Crucial for inspecting the yard for microscopic weed growth or unapproved lawn ornaments before heading to the "Wednesday Night Meatloaf Buffet". It is also handy for shining disapprovingly at a Y'all who might be blasting a hyperpop TikTok dance song by the club pool after dark.

Y'all's Equivalent: "Superior Night Vision"

Y'all's don't need artificial lighting tools. As documented in the survival guide, they rely entirely on their biological "superior night vision". This biological tool is especially useful because it allows them to pull into their driveway at 9:00 PM and completely avoid looking at the overgrown weeds they promised to pull three weeks ago.



4. The Post-Yardwork Recovery Gear

Boomer Tool: The Jumbo Ice Pack and Advil Caddy

After a grueling morning sculpting boxwoods in "sensible footwear", Boomer physical therapy is a "post-event necessity". Copious amounts of ice are required to soothe the "bone-weary regret" of pulling a hamstring while trying to prove they can still spread fifty bags of fresh mulch in a single Saturday.

Y'all's Equivalent: A GoPro 360 and a NASA-Engineered Protein Shake

For Y'all's, everything, including yard work, is "performance art". The GoPro 360 is strapped to their chest to film a time-lapse of their eco-friendly garden installation, set to whatever "obscure genre blew up on TikTok last week". Recovery immediately follows with a "protein shake so thick it requires a straw engineered by NASA".

- STORY, GRAPHICS: EDITOR



LADIES 9 LEAGUE

April 2 - What a beautiful day for golf! Doesn't get better than this. The game was Stableford on the Front Nine.

1st Place - Sandy Waldrup, Bede Johnson & Shirley Orvosh - 52
2nd & 3rd Tied - Val Flemming, Judy Sessions & Deb Elsea (blind) - 51
 Laurie Bracken, Karen Lioce & Anita O'Donnell - 51

3 Eagles: #2 - Bede Johnson, **#8** - Laurie Bracken, **#9** - Karen Lioce

April 23 - We decided to play their round, even though the fairways had just been aerated. The course was a bit challenging, but temperatures were pleasant and the smoke from the recent fires was at a minimum. Play was on the Back 9 and was two-fold; Individual weekly game and the second round of the 2025/26 Championship.

Individual Play

Flight #1: (Two players)

1st Place - Deb Elsea - Gross - 48

Flight #2:

1st Place - Karen Lioce - Gross 60

2nd Place tied - Bede Johnson - Gross 61
 Dianne Dearth - Gross 62

2025/26 Championship
 Results TBA at the Awards Meeting



- DIANNE DEARTH



dp

"They've named the ball and are raising it as their own."



HOME ON THE RANGE

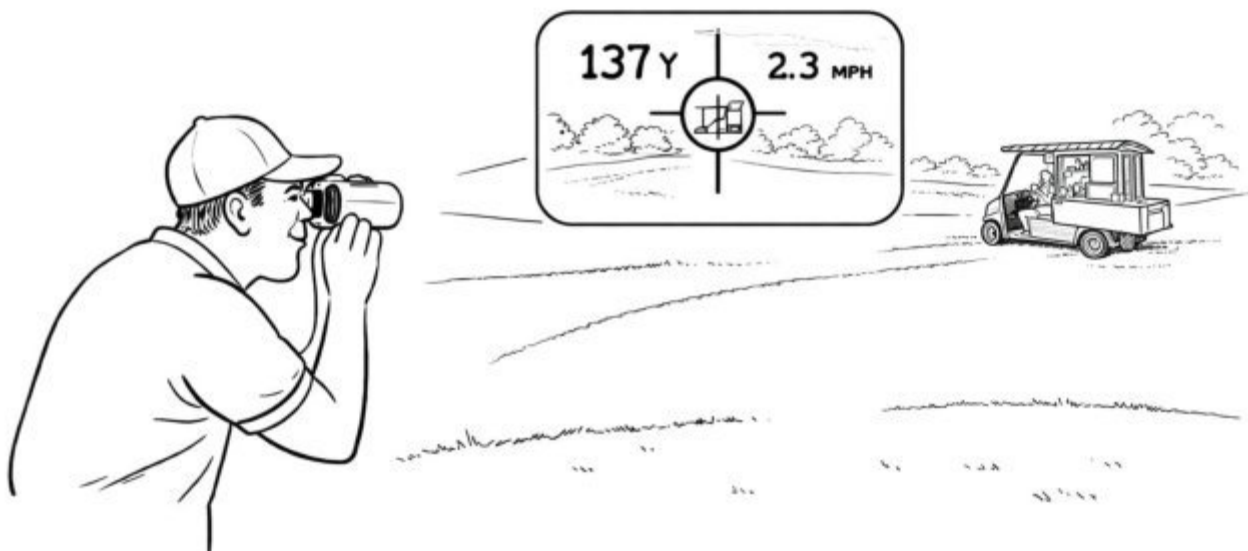
It began, as many questionable innovations do, with a simple question: how far is the drink cart? One enterprising resident recently demonstrated that his golf laser rangefinder could be repurposed for a task no HOA handbook has yet addressed: 'Anticipatory Beverage Acquisition'. With a flick of the wrist, a heroic squint, and the posture of a man who had absolutely no intention of laying up, he calculated that the drink cart was exactly 138 yards away and closing at a leisurely 2.3 miles per hour.

"Knowing the precise location of the Bud Light," he explained, "allows for fully responsible life decisions." By "responsible," he did not mean finishing the round in regulation, but rather choosing whether to intercept the cart at the 6th green or wait until it drifted tantalizingly close to the 8th, or, in a bold tactical maneuver, attempt a mid-fairway ambush.

"It began with a simple question: how far is the drink cart?"

Eyewitnesses reported a small crowd fresh from Couple's 9-Hole League play gathering, not for the golf, but for the suspense. Carl attempted to calculate wind resistance on a margarita. Denise, armed with a visor and level of focus usually reserved for NASA launches, began calling out yardages like a caddie possessed. Meanwhile, someone's unattended golf cart, still in drive, slowly rolled into a sand trap, where it rocked to rest like a defeated armadillo.

The laser enthusiast, now fully committed, adjusted for slope, humidity, and what he described as "beer



curvature." At one point, a rogue Canada goose wandered into the line of sight, causing a brief but dramatic recalibration that resulted in three men diving behind a cart for cover. No one could explain why. As the drink cart approached, tensions escalated. A well-meaning spectator attempted to signal its driver using two golf flags and what may have been semaphore. Another tripped over a cooler, launching a cascade of ice and unidentifiable snacks onto the fairway. A third, attempting to jog into interception position, slipped, spun twice, and accidentally executed the cleanest bunker exit shot of the day, without a club.

For a brief, shining moment, the sport of golf seemed entirely secondary to the geometry of Happy Hour. The Pro has not yet ruled on whether triangulating a frozen margarita constitutes a pace-of-play improvement, though early results suggest it may improve morale, if not scorecards. Meanwhile, whispers of "rangefinder etiquette" have spread, a delicate subject now responsible for more dramatic sighing than actual violations.

The moral of the story, according to our intrepid laser enthusiast: golf may be a game of precision, but life, and certain beverages, require even more exact measurements. And in Magnolia Point, it appears there's nothing quite so satisfying as knowing exactly when your next cocktail will arrive...down to the nearest yard, give or take one goose.

- STORY, GRAHIC: EDITOR

NOTE: See this month's featured 'MIXmagic' treat, the **'Range Finder'**, next page.



MIX *magic* RANGE FINDER

INGREDIENTS

- 2 oz Tequila (Blanco preferred)
- 1 oz Fresh Lime Juice
- 1 oz Orange Liqueur (such as Triple Sec or Cointreau)
- ½ oz Agave Nectar or Simple Syrup
- 1 to 1 ½ cups Ice
- Garnish: Margarita salt and a fresh lime wheel

RECIPE

- Prepare a rocks or margarita glass by rubbing a lime wedge along the rim and gently dipping it into the salt.

- Combine the tequila, lime juice, orange liqueur, and agave nectar in a blender.
- Add the ice. Like a true laser enthusiast, you can adjust your mixture for "slope, humidity, and what he described as "beer curvature" by tweaking the amount of ice for your preferred thickness.
- Blend on high speed until perfectly slushy and smooth.
- Pour into your salted glass and garnish with lime wheel.
- Serve immediately, ideally timing your first sip for the exact moment you intercept the drink cart at the 6th or 8th green, or *wherever!*

Inspired by "Home on the Range", "Range Finder" was created to facilitate "fully responsible life decisions" on the golf course *and off!* This icy cooler balances the sharp, tart snap of fresh lime with the smooth, sweet citrus of orange liqueur. The tequila provides an earthy, warming foundation that cuts right through the brain freeze. The result is a frosty, sweet-and-sour sip that is crisp and refreshing enough to keep your spirits high, and your refreshment in range!

- RECIPE, PHOTO: EDITOR



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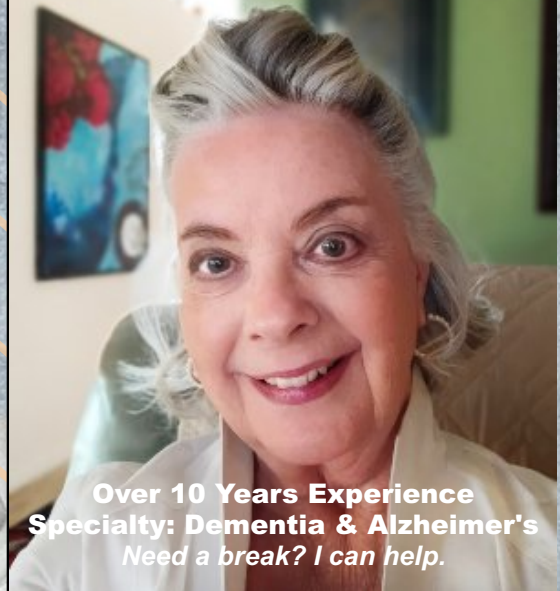
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GOOD 2 GO

*Like you, I have cherished Bill and Marcia Blackwell's culinary adventures in **The Traveling Fork** over the years. From Bill's Blue Ribbon Texas Cornbread to Marcia's Blueberry Almond Pound Cake, they have given us countless reasons to gather around the table. As the Blackwells hang up their aprons for a well-deserved sabbatical, we are launching **Good 2 Go**. This new column is dedicated to bringing you quick, nutritious meals with a distinct Southern flair...because even when we are short on time, we still deserve honest-to-goodness good food!*

Grits are one of the rare foods that have survived because they are genuinely versatile, deeply nourishing, and, when made well, sublimely delicious. From a pre-Columbian fireside to a white-tablecloth restaurant in Charleston, the basic act of slowly cooking ground corn into a warm, comforting porridge has remained essentially unchanged. They're a living piece of American culinary history. The word "grits" itself likely derives from the Old English 'grytt', meaning coarse meal or bran, though it was the Indigenous preparation that gave the dish its form.

Today we are pairing vibrant, fresh vegetables with quick-seared Gulf shrimp. Baking the grits with eggs and cheese after they are prepared, transforms the dish into a sliceable, protein-rich casserole that reheats beautifully for busy mornings. This recipe comes compliments of Big John, the legendary Shipwright-in-Residence at Red Bay Marina here for years, and a favorite among fellow liveboards here.

***The 'Good 2 Go' Fast Fact:** Swapping traditional stone-ground grits for quick-cooking grits cuts your stove-top time down to just 5 minutes! Of course, no one in Green Cove Springs will admit to knowing you. That's why we've included the 'slow cook' variant.*

'NO GRITS, NO GLORY'

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups chicken broth (or water)
- 1 cup quick-cooking grits (*not instant!*)
- 1 1/2 cups sharp grated cheddar cheese
- *1/2 cup chopped jalapeño peppers (adjust for heat; canned Mexican jalapeños run hotter than fresh, cross-pollinated varieties.)
- 2 tbsp olive oil or melted butter
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper

In place of jalapeño, substitute Black-Eyed Peas, Sautéed Greens, Caramelized Onions and Mushrooms, Diced Roasted Butternut Squash or Sweet Potato, **or classic proteins, such as crumbled breakfast sausage, diced ham, or crumbled bacon.*



Continued



Traditional Grits

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees F. Lightly grease a 9x13-inch baking dish with cooking spray or a little olive oil.

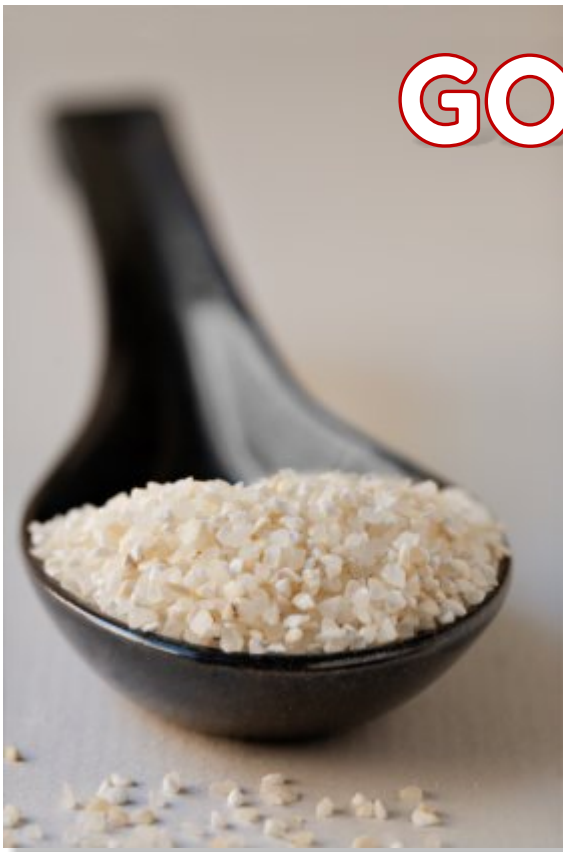
In a large saucepan, bring the chicken broth to a rolling boil over medium-high heat. Slowly whisk in the quick-cooking grits to prevent any lumps from forming. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and let it simmer for about 5 to 7 minutes, stirring occasionally until the grits are thick and have absorbed most of the liquid.

Adjust the Liquid: Increase chicken broth to 5 cups for every 1 cup of 'real' grits.

Increase the Simmer: Bring the broth to a rolling boil and slowly whisk in the stone-ground grits. Cover, simmer, cook for 45 to 60 minutes.

Stir Frequently: Uncover, whisk every 5 to 10 minutes, preventing them sticking to the saucepan & releases the starches that makes them creamy.

Finish and Bake: Once the grits are thick, tender, and have absorbed the liquid, remove from heat. Stir in your cheese, jalapeños, seasonings and eggs exactly as the original recipe states, then proceed to bake the casserole.

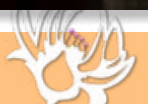


Remove the pan from the heat. Quickly stir in the olive oil, salt, black pepper, chopped jalapeños, and one cup of the sharp grated cheddar cheese. Once the cheese is completely melted and the mixture has cooled just slightly, briskly stir in your lightly beaten eggs until everything is perfectly homogenous.

Pour the grits mixture into your prepared baking dish, smoothing the top with a spatula. Sprinkle the remaining half cup of cheddar cheese evenly over the surface. Bake uncovered for 35 to 40 minutes, or until the casserole is set in the middle and the cheese is beautifully golden brown on top. Let it cool for just a few minutes before slicing into warm, comforting squares.



- RECIPE, PHOTOS: EDITOR





-EDITOR



POND VIEWS



FACES & NAMES



How long have you lived in Magnolia Point?

We've been living in our remote pond here in Magnolia Point for years, before most human residents moved in. We appreciate that the neighbors here enjoy the variety of wildlife in their backyards, which allows us to live and swim in peace.

Who's in your immediate family, at home here or elsewhere?

It's just the two of us, I'm Biff, I'm an 11-footer, and my darling Betty, just over 9 feet, along with our multitude of hatchlings. We are raising our young in privacy, away from the golf course and the busy roads.

Do you have any pets?

We do, from time to time; but they don't last very long! But we do keep a very close eye on the local fish, frogs, and the occasional water bird that visits our pond.

What was your passion at 16?

Biff: Basking on the muddy banks and perfecting my stealthy glide through the duckweed. Betty: Finding the absolute best sunning spots and practicing my 'SNAP'!

And now?

Our passions are our family and spending time in the water. We enjoy our daily peregrinations around the banks, floating like logs, and keeping the local ecosystem in perfect balance. Betty: 'Sometimes we go to the beach at night, and leave behind sand sculptures just to freak out the humans!'

What advice would you give to a 16-year old today?

Stay patient in the reeds, grow at your own pace, never rush to snap at the first thing that crosses your path. Keep a low profile, always respect the humans who share this beautiful community with us. 'And don't get too close to the edge!'

What do you like most about your home?

We love the quiet privacy of our remote pond, the majestic thunderstorms, the warm Florida sun that heats our favorite basking logs. The sheer spaciousness of the water gives everyone in our multitude of young their own space to swim. Biff: 'And hide from me!'

Do you have any household projects in the 'planning' or 'dream' stage?

We're always expanding our nesting mound and digging out deeper mud holes to stay cool during these extreme summer temps.

Do you see yourself living here in 5 years?

Sure, as long as we can stay under the radar! We couldn't ask for a better pond! Biff: 'Besides, who else would have us?!'









MAGNOLIA POINT BRIDGE

New Players Welcome!

All games are friendly, and we welcome new players. Sign up with a partner or as a single. For social one prize is paid out for each table, i.e., if there are four tables, the top four scores win money. Duplicate pays first three winners NS and EW with Mitchell movement.

Duplicate and Social Bridge play on alternate Thursdays in the clubhouse dining room from 1:30 to 5:30PM. The fees are \$2.00 for Social and \$3.00 for Duplicate to cover the cost of prize money and supplies.

CONTACT

Social: mamers3@bellsouth.net

Duplicate: JonBastress@gmail.com

Duplicate Bridge, Thu April 02

East/West Winners

1. Sharon Sprott & Ed Szymanski
2. Jon Bastress & Joe Thill
3. Monica & Steve Harmon

North/South Winners

1. Kim Belcher & David Miller
 2. Joan Sabanski & Carol Studer
- TIED* Mary Kendall & Brad Lucas

Social Bridge, Thu April 09

1. Connie & Michael Byers
2. Jola Greiner & Sharon Sprott
3. Jon Bastress & Joe Thill
4. Tom Hook & Anne Pat
5. Roy Gulick & Brad Lucas
6. Marty Essex & Cindy Jennings

Duplicate Bridge, Thu April 16

East/West Winners

1. Jon Bastress & Joe Thill
2. Sharon Sprott & Ed Szymanski
3. Jim Cordozo & Ed Hayes

North/South Winners

1. Monica & Steve Harmon
2. Joan Sabanski & Carol Studer
3. Don Maneval & Nancy Petillo

Social Bridge, Thu April 23

1. Mary Kendall & Sharon Murphy
2. Jef Flemming & Rannel Westberry
3. Jola Greiner & Sharon Sprott
4. Jon Bastress & Joe Thill
5. Alice Lodge & Kaaren Tague
6. Marty Essex & Cindy Jennings



- SHARON MURPHY

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